

*Lucile Rutland
Cresington, Louisiana*

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Light o' Love.

A PLAY IN ONE ACT
BY
LUCILE RUTLAND.





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1882

TO MY MOTHER.

PS 2744
.R75L5

NOTE: The old air of *Light o' Love*, to which I have written the words sung by the *Courier*, was found in an ancient manuscript and preserved in a collection called *Musick's Delight on the Cithern*, A. D. 1666. Shakespeare refers to it in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*; and again, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Margaret says:

“Clap us into *Light o' Love*, that goes without a burden; do you sing it and I'll dance it.”

The main action of this play, beginning with the entrance of DAVID YORK, was taken from a short story, entitled “Simon's Hour,” by James Branch Cabell.

LUCILE RUTLAND.

COVINGTON, LOUISIANA, 1906.

Light o' Love.

A PLAY IN ONE ACT
BY
LUCILE RUTLAND.

PLACE: *The Island of Stornway, four miles off the coast of England.*

PERIOD: *During the reign of George III.*

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DOROTHY.....Lady Fenton.
EDWARD GREY.....Lord Stornway.
DAVID YORK.....Vicar of Stornway.
GEORGE WARING.....Brother to Dorothy.
MRS. MERTON.....Friend to Lord Stornway.
ANNA.....Mrs. Merton's Maid.
JOYCE.....Retainer at Stornway Castle.

COURIER.

CAPTAIN OF THE PROTEUS AND TWO SAILORS.

SCENE: *The great Hall in Stornway Castle. A large, dark-paneled room—luminous, luxurious. Stairway at back, from L. C. to short, upper gallery R. C., finished with carved balustrade. Door above opening upon gallery R. U. Under gallery R. C. richly colored hangings conceal a small platform; upon it a crimson cushion is placed before a little altar bearing lighted candles, missals, rosary, crucifix and statue of the Virgin. Above the statue hangs portrait of a young woman. Wide, arched doorway L. C. opening upon a corridor. Arched double windows L. U. through which the end of evening glows and fades to starlight—to be later overshadowed with storm-clouds. Door L. Fire-place with lighted fire R. Portrait of man in uniform above mantel. Sword hanging L. of portrait. Chair L. of fire; couch R. of fire with colored cushions—and silk coverings thrown lightly*

across the back of it. Door R. U. Table L. C. with chairs on both sides of it. Rugs of wild animal skins, and other tokens of the chase tastefully disposed about the Hall.

TIME: *An Autumn Evening.*

At rise of curtain Mrs. Merton is half reclining upon couch, R. of fire, idly turning leaves of a book. She is a youngish woman of easy habits, wearing lavish clothes and a bored look. Throws book aside, rises wearily.

MRS. M.: (*Going C. Rings bell on table*) Really, I must take a little wine for my—soul's sake! This dull Island makes me feel moody—mouldy—mortal. I'll be glad to get back to London.
(*Enter Anna, door R. U.*)

ANNA: You rang for me, madam?

MRS. M.: Yes, Anna. Have the butler send me some wine; some of that *Alicante* he served at dinner last night. (*Looks at her keenly*) What is the matter? Why have you been crying?

ANNA: Because—O, nothing, ma'am! But, beggin' your pardon, I'm wishin' we was back in London.

MRS. M.: Oh! You, too! Why?

ANNA: Because—O, nothin', ma'am! But beggin' your pardon—there isn't a woman on this Island fit to speak to—and the men all look like pirates—exceptin' his lordship, of course!

MRS. M.: And the vicar? (*Anna hangs her head in embarrassed silence*) Why don't you sanction the vicar's looks, Anna?

ANNA: Because—O, nothin', ma'am! But, begging your pardon, he smells of gin—and tried to kiss me when I passed him on the beach yesterday—

MRS. M.: (*Interrupting*) What? (*Turns away L.*) That will do. Go—send the wine (*exit Anna door R. U.*) Well, well! it must be true; she's an honest girl. Doubtless, if I had to live on Stornway Island I'd get to smelling of gin, too. The wines are the most congenial spirits I've met since I came here, a week ago. But the vicar! They tell me he is David York. When I last saw him, ten years ago, he was the saintly young curate of St. Aubyn's in London. And I (so young and foolish!) adored him for a month—two months—perhaps three; I've forgotten! But he disappeared suddenly. And now—vicar of Stornway—smelling of gin—kissing servant girls! Ah, well! (*Goes to window L. U.*) Piety is a pretty garment, but easily torn! And the

tatters are apt to reveal either a Hypocrite or a Tragedy. (*Looks dismally out of window.*)

(*Enter George Waring L. C. in hunting suit. He is a youthful, undistinguished unit in the London smart set. His chief industry is getting into debt and his proudest achievement is getting out of it. Goes moodily toward fire.*)

GEORGE: Damn Stornway Island!

MRS. M.: (*Starts C. laughing*) Bravo, George! I couldn't have expressed it better myself.

GEORGE: (*Startled*) Mrs. Merton! I beg your pardon! I wasn't aware of your presence.

MRS. M.: But you must have been aware of my state of mind to express it so well. When Edward Grey asked me to come and play propriety during your sister's visit to Stornway Castle, I was too new to the rôle to realize what a bore it would be.

GEORGE: Propriety seems irrelevant to this barbaric place. Gad! it's primeval! I wonder how his lordship can live here after his visits to London?

MRS. M.: O, he was born here—and he likes it. It would make me revert to savagery. I was just getting ready to cry when you came in; whenever a woman wants to swear, she just cries, you know!

GEORGE: Then, I suppose when a man wants to cry, he just swears!

MRS. M.: (*Laughing*) Yes—a woman's tears are often a wordless profanity; and a man's oaths merely enunciated tears. But what was making you—cry, George? Debts again?

GEORGE: Remotely—yes. There's no escaping them! The very momentum that pulls me out of one seems to push me into another. But I'm worried about Dorothy now.

MRS. M. Your sister doesn't seem to share your perplexities.

GEORGE: O, Dorothy has no thought for anything but her own pleasure. You know her husband's will leaves me half of her rich estate if she marries again. He has been dead five years now; and she has, to my knowledge, refused ten good offers of marriage. She hasn't got a bit of consideration.

MRS. M.: (*Amused*) For you, George—or the ten others?

GEORGE: (*Serious*) Why for me, of course! Now here's Lord Stornway trying to get her; and I'll wager he fails—for all your help and mine. It's deuced queer!

MRS. M.: Yes—considering, too, that she never loved her husband.

GEORGE: O, Dorothy never loved anything. She flits from one flame to another like a wayward moth;—a moth with asbestos wings that never get singed! (*Enter Joyce; places flagon of wine on table.*) Ah am I in time for tea? (*exit Joyce*).

MRS. M.: (*Busies herself with glasses*) No—tea was served an hour ago. This is *Alicante*. Come! let us drink to the ghost of Lord Stornway's Spanish mother, from whose country this vintage comes. (*Pours wine, sits L. of table*).

GEORGE: (*Takes glass, sits R. of table*) Thanks! from all I've heard of the poor lady she needed something like this in which to drown her troubles.

MRS. M.: You've heard her story, then?

GEORGE: Only that she lived a recluse here for ten years and died insane.

MRS. M.: Ah! (*sips wine reflectively*) She and her betrothed were cast ashore here from a storm-wrecked Spanish vessel. Edward Grey's father, the old Lord Stornway, became enamoured with her—had her lover rowed to the mainland one stormy night and—married her himself!

GEORGE: Then his lordship gets his medieval tastes from his Spanish mother; and evidently his father's blood does not constrain him to practice self-denial.

MRS. M.: (*Smiles indulgently*) No—Edward Grey isn't enrolled upon the calendar of Saints. And his subjects on this Island are today just what they were in the time of the old lord: part fisherman, part pirate and part devil. They worship Edward Grey as though he were a god—and fear nothing else.

GEORGE: Gad! he has a shepherd here in keeping with such a flock of black sheep. Have you seen the vicar of Stornway?

MRS. M.: (*Nervously*). No—I do not wish to—as he is! I—knew him years ago, before he took to drink and—the rest of it—and Lord Stornway took him out of the gutter, or some starved attic in London and brought him here. I've heard that he serves his lordship like a trained cur and worships him like his other vassals.

GEORGE: Well—I've just been hunting with him; rather, I did the hunting—he wouldn't even carry a gun; said he'd never killed any living thing, except a boy—

MRS. M.: (*Interrupts, in horror*) Oh! A boy!

GEORGE: Yes—I was shocked, too—at first; and asked how he'd killed him. He said: "Drowned him in gin—and he haunts me yet o' moonlit nights when the rose-vine blooms at the vicarage!" Then he broke off to turn a wanton smile upon a fisherman's wife. When she passed he fell silent and grim. At last he gripped my arm and growled: "God help you, Waring, if you're ever haunted by the ghost of the boy you used to be—whom some fool woman has tricked you into murdering!" But I shook him off and pushed on ahead. I knew he was drinking and didn't know what he was saying.

MRS. M. (*Rising.*) O, yes—David York knew what he was saying. (*Meditates; aside.*) I am glad its the Tragedy and not the Hypocrite that walks in the tatters of *his* piety! I wonder who she was? I wonder! (*Goes slowly toward door R. U.*)

GEORGE: (*Rising*) Mrs. Merton, where is Dorothy?

MRS. M.: (*Turning*) She and Lord Stornway have been out all the afternoon, riding about the Island.

GEORGE: Let us hope she'll see its beauties.

MRS. M.: (*Smiling*) And consent to permanently eclipse them with her own?

(*Enter Dorothy, door L. C. Wears riding suit of green velvet with plumed hat. Holds admiringly aloft a sheaf of gold and red Autumn leaves. She is a beautiful auburn-haired woman of twenty-seven—dainty, delectable—with an instinct to allure and an impulse for pleasure that have not led her heart into paths of peace. She is closely followed by Lord Stornway—also in riding suit, of brown and gold. He is a man of thirty; handsome in a somber way; with the courage of his desires and with a habit of mastery that only expedience softens into courtesy.*)

DOROTHY: (*Up stage*) O, George—Mrs. Merton—look at my Autumn leaves! (*Goes R. C.*)

MRS. M.: How beautiful! You've had a long ride. What did you see?

DOROTHY: (*Puts leaves on table*) Such a ride! We went straight across country through a legion of forest trees in gold and scarlet—royal Dryad armies encamped upon a Field of the Cloth of Gold! Then on to the farthest reach of the Island—where grim cliffs are massed at the verge of the shining sea, like storm-clouds about the horizon of a Summer sky. We followed the coast line back to the village of Stornway; then, on home by way of the vicarage and the ivy-covered church. O, a most pessimistic church! frankly deviating into disuse and decay. In the village we saw bonnie lassies mending nets on the

sands; and the returning crew of the *Proteus*, just in harbor, all showed an obliging tendency to walk right into their nets! Such a lot of picturesque savages they were—(*laughs.*)

STORNWAY: (*L. C.*) My friends, Lady Fenton!

DOROTHY: Yes—so you told me. But they *do* look like pirates. One of them—the one, my lord, with the guitar—

STORNWAY: My courier.

DOROTHY: He was singing a sweet ballad—something about love. I sent his lordship to bid him come to the Castle and sing it for us.

STORN: He will come. He often serves as minstrel for the Castle.

DOROTHY: (*Taking up leaves*) And now to dispose of my golden treasures! (*Looks about hall tentatively.*)

MRS. M: Suppose we use them in Harvest Home tableaux—

GEORGE: (*Interrupting*) O, don't, please! The last time I took part in tableaux I felt, for a week, like a graven image.

DOROTHY: The one Aaron made for the Israelites?

GEORGE: (*Dubiously*) Er—yes—I suppose so.

DOROTHY: (*Sweetly*) It was a brazen calf, you know!

MRS. M.: But really, Lady Fenton, let us have the tableaux. With those leaves and some ripened grain you can pose as Ceres.

GEORGE: (*Interrupts*) Don't suggest a new series of poses to her, Mrs. Merton! She's affected enough now.

DOROTHY: (*Solicitous*) George, dear, if you must give your mind such violent exercise as making puns, don't do it at my expense.

GEORGE: It's all I can do at your expense. (*To Stornway.*) My lord, she's refused me any further credit—

DOROTHY: That's to *my* credit!

GEORGE: So, being abandoned to my own wits—

DOROTHY: (*Laughing*) Like the drowning man to his straw!

GEORGE: I've sold everything I had except Waringcourt—and I'm trying to find a buyer for that.

STORN.: You haven't yet sold yourself, George. I know a girl in London who will take you at your own terms.

GEORGE: (*Pleased*) Do you? But who wants that kind of a girl!

STORN: True! We men are made of dust—but we always grasp at the stars.

MRS. M.: Oh, if you are going to talk sentiment (*goes toward door R. U.*), I'll go. Sentiment always goes to my head. (*Exits*).

STORN: (*Looking at Dorothy*) I wish it would go to a heart I know and teach it to be kind.

(*Dorothy begins placing Autumn boughs above mantle R. with absorbed interest.*)

GEORGE: Well, sentiment is like debt—or the devil; if it once gets a hold on you, you never feel like your own man again.

DOROTHY: (*Smiling at him over her shoulder*) George, dear—such reach of thought inspires me—

GEORGE: (*Pleased*) O, thank you!

DOROTHY: Inspires me to test your reach of arm. Come, adjust this sheaf of leaves over that portrait for me.

GEORGE: (*Injured*) Interior decoration isn't in my line. (*Goes to door L.*) Besides I'm too tired for work.

STORN: Then we cannot have a game after dinner, George?

GEORGE: (*Brightening*) A game! Surely! with Waringcourt for stakes—'faith! it's all I have left to lose!

STORN.: I lost last night. Perhaps your luck will hold.

GEORGE: (*Bowing*) You're a noble loser, my lord. May you meet all defeat as bravely! (*Exits*)

STORN: (*Goes slowly to chair L. C.*) All defeat—ah, if I could! (*Sits, leaning his head upon his hand.*)

DOROTHY: (*Busy with leaves*) Why not? (*Points to portrait.*) With such a precedent? I've heard wondrous tales of your grandfather's valor.

STORN: (*Lifting his head proudly*) Aye—he was a gallant gentleman and a soldier! I keep his sword there that I may always have in mind how bravely he used it in defense of his friends and defeat of his foes.

DOROTHY: Heaven defend *your* foes, my lord, if the mere word so stirs your wrath!

STORN: You are my greatest foe, Dorothy.

DOR.: (*Goes R. C., bows mockingly*) You flatter me! Invest me with a power I have not claimed—

STORN: (*Rising—impatiently*) O, you claim nothing! And yet—

DOR.: (*Goes close to him—wistfully*) Ah, yes I do, Ned! I claim your tenderness—your loyalty. If you ever marry, how I will miss you—and hate your wife! (*Sits forlornly R. of table. He leans over her.*) You see, you've spoiled me. You've been so good to me, Ned! Sometimes I wish—

STORN.: What, dear?

DOR.: O, a fantastic thing! 'Tis said a certain Arab sage could loose the subtle spirit of a gem so that nothing but the ashes of it remained for others' use. (*Lays her hand upon his arm, rests her head upon it.*) If you were only that Arab sage, Ned—and I, the gem—

STORN: (*Passionately*) Then you'd be mine—only mine!

DOR.: (*Dreamily*) Suppose—another fantastic thing! That I were a flower in a desert—and you, the South wind—

STORN: Then all your sweetness would be mine—only mine!

DOR.: Or, suppose—that I were the deep, untroubled sea—and you, the sky above me—

STORN: Then you'd have no other light but my love—no image but mine in your heart! (*Embraces her.*) Oh, my darling—

DOR.: (*Shrinking away from him—lightly*) There! You've scattered the fancies. I am only I—and you are you!

STORN.: Will you always so use me, Dorothy? Your lips banish me—while your eyes beckon; your word denies me—while your voice draws my soul as a bird is lured to the fowler's snare. Why are you so cruel?

DOR.: (*Regards him languidly*) I am not cruel. But you can never understand! Women love—Love! and men—

STORN.: (*Bitterly*) Merely love women!

DOR.: No,—they love victory.

STORN: (*Smiling*) But who really wins the victory can only be proven after marriage.

DOR.: (*Wearily*) O, we are not talking about marriage; on the contrary, we are talking of love!

STORN: (*Leaning over her*) 'Faith! What a rare frame your mouth makes for the word! Its color and sweetness challenge all my love for—victory. (*Kisses her.*)

DOR.: (*Starting up*) Living in the country always spoils a man's manners. Yours suggest primeval forests.

STORN: Yes, they are true to Nature. But, Dorothy, it rests with you to make me what you will. Incentives, I know, should come from the soul. But you are the whole sphere of my soul. O, Dorothy—I love you!

DOR.: (*Turning away—languidly*) Why, how charming of you!

STORN: (*Sternly*) It is not a matter for jesting. I tell you I love you—love you!

DOR.: (*Reproachfully*) Well, you need not boast of it, as though loving me were an uncommonly difficult achievement!

STORN: Have a care, Dorothy! Your allurements have fed the flame of my love until it consumes me—stifles me. (*Suddenly stops, takes her hand, draws her to the curtained alcove.*) Why, look you! (*Draws back curtain—points to portrait above altar.*) That is my mother, Dorothy—

DOR.: (*Abashed*) Yes, my lord—your mother; you told me of her today.

STORN: This was her little altar. I keep these candles burning day and night—because she was the only woman I ever loved—except you. And I swear to you here, that I would rather be dead before this altar to-night than to have to forego you and your love. (*Turns to her passionately.*) O, Dorothy, I have ceased to be myself—I am only an incarnate desire for you! If you will not give yourself to me—(*pauses—fierce and breathless.*)

DOR.: (*Steps back with smiling insolence*) Then you'll take me, I suppose; as your lordship's father sequestered his lady love!

STORN.: (*Startled*) True—the will of a Grey is always his highest law! (*Turns away in deep reflection.*) Dorothy!

DOR.: (*Tenderly*) Ned?

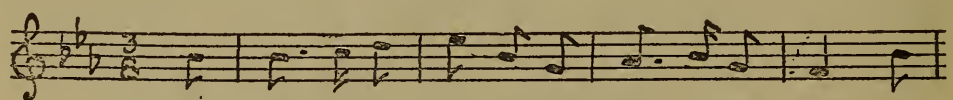
STORN: (*Goes to her slowly*) Will you marry me?

DOR.: Heavens! how can you expect me to marry a man who frowns at me like that! (*Goes with exaggerated carelessness to door R. U.*) Besides—we must dress for dinner. We will be late as it is. (*Exits.*) (*Guitar heard without playing the prelude to Light o' Love.*)

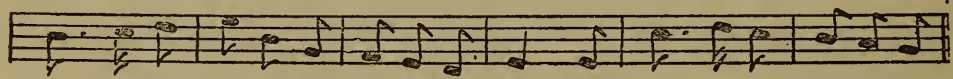
STORN.: (*After a baffled instant steadies himself with an upward grasp upon the altar curtain*) God! to master her! * * * There is only one way. By Heavens, I'll do it! Where Love leads he is a coward who fears to follow!

(*Enter slowly the Courier with guitar. A lad of twenty, fair and slender, wearing the bright, picturesque garb of a minstrel.*)

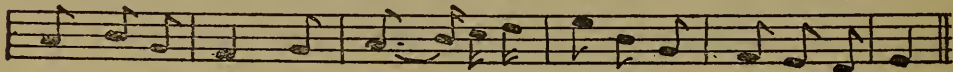
COURIER: (*Sings softly, with guitar accompaniment.*)



THE LIGHT O' LOVE LEADETH OUR FANCIES AS-TRAY, AS



OFT INTO DARKNESS AS INTO THE DAY. GOD SPEED YOU, GOOD SIRS, IN THE



SUN-SHINE A-BOVE; BUT 'WARE HOW YOU FOLLOW THE SWEET LIGHT O' LOVE.

(*As he sings, comes slowly down L. C.; pauses*) 'Faith! I'll waste no more breath on the empty air. Though 'tis as profitable to sing that song to the empty air as to a lover; for his sighs winnow his head of all sense till nothing but the mere man—that is, mere chaff—be left. I've tried it on a sad dozen and they all cry, "Get you gone!" (*Sees Stornway, who has advanced to him—bows low in confusion.*) My lord!

STORN: Remain here—I may need you. (*Exits hurriedly door L.*)

COURIER: (*Looks after him amazed*) 'Tis the first time any man ever bid me remain after hearing me sing that song! Heigh-ho! I *will* compose ballads chockful o' wisdom, whether the lovers like it or no! It takes skill to get wisdom into a lover, so I give it to him under cover of rhyme and rhythm—like a sugar-coated pill. But lord! lord! how they all flock around and praise me when I sing songs full of love and folly. (*Walks about impatiently.*) "Remain here," forsooth! How long? 'Faith! I've affairs of my own. A lady love waiting for me with enough liquid fire in her eyes to melt the very marrow in my bones! (*Sits L. C. by table.*) For, since I put all my wisdom into my ballads for others' use, there is nothing left me but to lead a life of folly myself. (*Looks around with wry face.*) "Remain here!" Aie! (*Sees flagon of wine—takes it.*) Ah! here's inducement! (*Takes a long drink.*) That's no tavern brew! 'Tis liquid poetry—every drop rhymes! I'll drink enough of it to go to my head!—it has felt empty since it brought forth my last sonnet.

(*Takes another long drink.*) Ah, that was a whole ballad! Let me see if I can translate it into words. (*Looks about table for paper—takes up pen and writes.*)

Before two bright and deathless fires
Inclines this heart of mine—
The altars of its fond desire:
Woman and sparkling Wine. (*Drinks.*)

They are begotten of earth and skies
For man's deep bane or bliss;
The spell that lies in a woman's eyes
We find in a draught of this. (*Drinks.*)

Say not their influence is accursed!
No power is more divine—
No nectar as sweet to slake man's thirst,
I say, as Woman and Wine. (*Drinks.*)

But in the *envoi* I must write
A secret that men should know:
The only way to forget them quite
Is * * *

(*Pauses, beginning to be overcome with the wine.*) Is * * * the only way to forget them quite is—Zounds! What the devil is the only way to forget 'em? (*Leans head helplessly upon his arm—arouses.*) What was I saying? O, yesh, I know! Woman and Wine—blesh 'em! ballad to 'em * * * got to the *envoi* * * * (*Writes with effort.*)

But in the *envoi* I must write
A secret—that all—men keep—
The only way—to forget—them quite
Is—just—to go—to sleep!

(*Falls asleep with head pillowed upon his arm. The sunset glow fades to twilight; twilight deepens to darkness and the stars are seen through window L. U. Enter Joyce, door L.; replenishes fire—lights up hall. Knocking heard without.*)

JOYCE: (*Going to door L. C.*) Well, well—who's storming the castle now? (*Opens door.*) Who's without? O, 'tis the Captain of the *Proteus*! (*Enter Captain of the Proteus—middle-aged, hard and grizzled.*)

A VOICE: (*Without*) And two sailors, empty as your head, Master Joyce! (*Enter two sailors; youngish, shaggy, picturesque looking men. All three men wear barbaric touches of color and knives sheathed in their belts.*)

CAPTAIN: (*Going down L. C.—to Joyce*) If his lordship has finished dinner, tell him we got his orders and are here.

FIRST SAILOR: (*Goes R. C., bends forward with wry face and hands on stomach*) Oh, aie! We're here,—but our dinner isn't. We had to hurry off and leave it untasted; and I'm so empty I can't tell whether I have the stomach-ache or the back-ache.

JOYCE: Yes, Captain, he has dined. He's writing in the library; in the devil of a temper, too. When he gets in that white, dead calm 'makes me feel like Judgment Day's coming for somebody.

CAPTAIN: Aye—I know him; and his father before him. Get on,—his order was for all speed. (*Exit Joyce L. shaking his head.*)

SECOND SAILOR: (*Up-stage*) Heaven send he's not after ordering the *Proteus* to sail again just as she has made harbor!

FIRST SAILOR: And just as you've found the vicar of Stornway casting sheep's eyes at your own lady-love?

SECOND SAILOR: Black sheep's eyes—curse him! I'll have my vengeance on David York some day, in spite of his lordship.

FIRST SAILOR: O, we've all scores to settle with him. He'll come to judgment, I'm thinking, whenever his lordship leaves Stornway again.

CAPTAIN: Whist, lads! it would go ill with ye if his lordship heard ye. Let David York alone; he's no worse than ye are after the women. The Lord designed ye for men—but the best two of ye will fight like dogs over a remnant of Adam's rib. (*Discovers Courier; goes to him.*) Ho! here's *this* good for naught! What's got into him?

SECOND SAILOR: (*Goes to table—takes up flagon*) This!

FIRST SAILOR: (*Seizes flagon—turns it up to drink—finds no wine*) Bah! empty as I am!

SECOND SAILOR: And his head's as full as a jib in a gale.

FIRST SAILOR: The fool has stowed all his ballast aloft and keeled over.

CAPTAIN: (*Shaking Courier's shoulder*) Here—wake up, you derelict! Though it's little good towing ye in—nobody'd pay salvage on ye.

COURIER: (*Sleepily kissing Captain's hand*) Ah, gentle lady!

CAPTAIN: (*Snatching his hand away*) Let be! (*Cuffs him*) Get up—and learn to be a man! Ye can't be swaddled and pampered and dandled into one either by the women. Ye've got to face the wind and taste the brine—

- COURIER: (*Dreamily*) Women—ah, yes! The only way to forget them quite is—
- CAPTAIN: To marry 'em, 'faith!
- COURIER: Nay—ask me not to marry. I never indulge in games of chance. (*Picks up guitar.*)
- CAPTAIN: Ye indulge in worse things, I'm thinking. But go on! Ye are not the first fool who mistook wine and women for life preservers—instead of millstones that'll sink ye to Davy Jones. (*Starts up stage. Enter Lord Stornway door L.—exquisitely attired in suit of white and gold.*)
- COURIER: (*Rises unsteadily—bows low*) My lord, I've—remained here!
- FIRST SAILOR: (*Bows, with his hands on his stomach*) We are filled with nothing but pleasure at your lordship's commands!
- SECOND SAILOR: (*Bowing*) Good evening, my lord.
- CAPTAIN: (*Bowing*) I hope we find your lordship well.
- STORNWAY: (*Crossing R. C.*) Good evening, men. You're in good time. (*Stops at stair.*) Captain, have a boat at the Northeast pier well-manned and ready to sail for the mainland within the hour. Have another at the village pier, also ready to sail within that time.
- CAPTAIN: Aye, aye, my lord.
- STORNWAY: Place sentinels at every gate leading into the castle grounds, with instructions to admit no one until I give the word.
- CAPTAIN: Aye, aye, my lord.
- STORNWAY: (*To First Sailor*) You stand guard at the lower terrace. (*To Second Sailor*) You at the upper terrace near the entrance to the castle. (*To Captain and Courier*) You two guard the great gates at the lodge. Go! Make all haste, I pray you. (*Ascends several steps—turns.*) Report to me here at midnight for further orders. (*Ascends to gallery; turns, looks at them fiercely.*) Why do you stand there agape, as though you'd seen a ghost? (*All start, subdued and silent toward door L. C.*) Zounds, men! make not your going as it were to a funeral. 'Tis no dire occasion,—but the preface to a feast. I'll have you here drinking my health to-morrow. Now—go! (*Exits—door opening upon gallery.*)
- CAPTAIN: Come, boys! here's a queer night's work—food for your vacant minds. (*Exits L. C.*)
- FIRST SAILOR: And it's food for our vacant stomachs we need! (*Exits L. C.*)

SECOND SAILOR: And David York free to go a-philandering! (*Exits L. C.*)

COURIER: (*Lightly touching the prelude to Light o' Love*) And my lady-love vainly waiting! The liquid fire in her eyes will be clean washed out with tears. (*Exits L. C. Outside all sing Light o' Love as they leave.*)

(*Enter Dorothy, R. U., in evening gown. Hears singing.*)

DOROTHY: Ah, the little love song! (*Goes to window L. U., opens it, leans out to listen. Singing dies away in the distance.*) What black clouds in the West! And it is growing cold. (*Closes window—shivers.*) A storm is brewing. How good to be safely housed in this stronghold—storms frighten me so! (*Goes C.*) What a haunting little ballad that is. (*Softly essays a few measures of Light o' Love.*) I wish I could have caught the words; something about love. (*Sighs.*) Ah, well! they must be sad if they are about love. (*After a pensive instant.*) But I came here to try and forget! (*Passionately*) Dear God! what a purblind, unconquerable thing the heart is! (*Goes toward fire, with effort at cheerfulness.*) Well,—let me see! how to spend the evening alone! George and Lord Stornway are at cards; Mrs. Merton has retired with a headache. * * * I wish I had called the minstrel in to sing me that little ballad! (*Sings a few measures; suddenly stops—dispairingly. Sinks upon couch R. of fire.*) Oh, it is no use—no use! How can I learn to live with a broken heart!

(*Enter David York L. C. He is about thirty years old; of slight stature, with pale, clean-shaven face, restless, dark eyes and disheveled black hair. He wears long, mud-stained coat over his clergyman's garb.*)

DAVID: (*Standing at door—peering back into corridor.*) Now, of a truth, that is strange—very strange! (*Closes door; goes slowly toward Dorothy.*) Yes, Lady Fenton, it is decidedly curious.

DOROTHY: (*Coldly.*) What is curious, Mr. York?

DAVID: Faith! that damned sailor—I beg your ladyship's pardon!—our life on Stornway is not conducive to a mincing nicety of speech. But the rascal made some difficulty over admitting me; acted like a sentinel—with the castle in a state of siege. He ruffled me—and—and I don't like it! (*Looks about the Hall suspiciously—then at Dorothy.*) Where is your brother?

DOROTHY: He and Lord Stornway are at cards, I believe.

DAVID: Where is Mrs. Merton—who, I hear, is playing chaperone for this select house party?

DOROTHY: She retired to her apartments immediately after dinner with one of her usual headaches. You visit Stornway castle somewhat late, Mr. York.

DAVID: (*With a gesture upward toward the gallery.*) Old Evans, my lord's valet, is dying up yonder. The whim seized him to have a clergyman in; God knows why! One knave ought to make his way to hell without another knave to help him. And Evans? Eh, well! from all I know of him he's damned already. (*Removes his long coat, throws it and his hat on chair R. of table.*) Gad! we are most of us damned on Stornway. And that is why I don't like it. (*Looks about Hall furtively.*) Lady Fenton, I don't like it!

DOROTHY: (*Indifferently.*) You will pardon me—but I was never good at riddles.

DAVID: (*Crossing his arms—strokes his chin in meditation.*) I will read you my riddle then—you are rich; as women go, you're not as unpleasant to look at as most of them—

DOR.: (*Laughing*) What a finished, gracious flatterer you are, Mr. York!

DAVID: (*Same play*) Lord Stornway has had great losses of late, and seems to have lost his heart, as well. Last month, at Tunbridge, you refused to marry him. I am in his confidence, you see. He took your refusal quietly, and came back to Stornway. Beware of Edward Grey when he is quiet! Eh, I know him! These eight years I've studied his moods, pampered him, lied to him, cringed to him—

DOR.: How very candid you are!

DAVID: Why not? You must have heard how he took me out of the gutter—where your varied and elusive charms finally landed me; and I've been his lackey, his hanger-on, his cur, ever since.

DOR.: His lordship must feel deeply touched by such lofty devotion—such frank and noble gratitude!

DAVID: Nay, I am grateful—in a way. But, I know him; and I warn you, Dorothy! Ten years ago, before you used me so cruelly, I would have gone singing to the stake for you. Now, I don't value you at the worth of a penny. But for old time's sake—I warn you!

DOR.: If you can't be gallant, you are, at least, melodramatic and entertaining!

DOR.: Pooh! 'tis no time for quips. (*Goes nearer to her.*) You adorable, heartless little flirt! What madness, induced you to come to Stornway? You know that his lordship loves you; you know that you don't intend to marry him. Then, why come?

DOR.: (*Laughing*) The melodrama thickens! For mere sake of plot, you might reflect that my brother is here with me and is a good swordsman.

DAVID: I grant you that. But you are on Stornway. Do you know who is king here on this sea-washed scrap of earth? German George reigns yonder in England; but on this Island Edward Grey is king. And it is not precisely a convent that he rules over.

DOR.: Oh! you are speaking in your capacity of spiritual adviser? Mrs. Merton, you know, is here to represent the proprieties.

DAVID: (*Laughs*) Propriety on Stoneway! God save the mark! Besides, she could be melted down for the candle trade at his lordship's lightest word. As I've intimated, my worthy patron is subject to the frailties of the flesh. Oh, I'm candid; and if you report me to him I shall lie out of it.

DOR.: You've doubtless had practice enough to do it convincingly.

DAVID: (*Bowing*) Well inferred! But, Dorothy (*goes close to her*) consider the situation seriously a moment—

DOR.: (*Rises, turns away*) I would be glad to attribute your warning to a somewhat officious friendliness; but your breath compels me to attribute it to the vagaries of—gin!

DAVID: (*Shrinking away from her*) Oh, I've been drinking! (*Bitterly.*) I've perservered in drinking for ten long, despairing years; yet have not quite succeeded in making myself a drunkard. But do you know what Edward Grey is?

DOR.: Yes! (*turns upon him angrily*) I know him to be a noble gentleman! Believe me, if you, too, were a gentleman, you would understand. A gentleman is not a tale bearer; a gentleman does not defame the friend to whom he owes his daily bread!

DAVID: (*Regards her sadly*) I had not thought anything you would say could hurt me. I find I was mistaken. * * * Perhaps I am not a gentleman. Faith, no! I'm only a shabby, would-be drunkard—a disgrace to my cloth—

DOR.: (*Coldly*) I was discourteous. I beg your pardon. And now, Mr. York, if you will allow the suggestion, I think you had better go to your dying parishioner.

DAVID: (*Unheedingly—passionately*) I am a drunkard! Who made me so? Who lured me on with soft words and softer kisses. Yes, kisses—Lady Fenton!—till a rich man came a-wooing—then cast me aside without apology or regret?

DOR.: (*Abashed*) O, that boy and girl affair! I found that I did not love you. I was only a girl—you, a promising, pious youth; it was natural that I should have been mistaken in my feeling for you. Surely, you cannot blame me for your ruined life!

DAVID: (*Catching her hand*) Can you not understand, Dorothy, how a man says, "You will not have me, therefore, I'll go to the devil?" Can't you understand how, when a man's heart is broken, he finds some oblivion to the pain of it at the bottom of a wine glass? or how he remembers that there are other women whose hearts are more tender—and yes—whose virtue is less exigent?

DOR.: (*Wrenching her hand from him*) Oh! you—you should not speak of such things to me!

DAVID: They are not for nice ears like yours! But the fact remains that a man betrayed, broken-hearted, has his choice of two consolations—wine and women. I have tried both—

DOR.: How dare you say this to me!

DAVID: (*Turns away hopelessly*) O, no woman understands these things! At least, you would not—because you are only a heartless jilt.

DOR.: Insolent!

DAVID: Perhaps I am. It scarcely matters what a sot like me may say. (*Goes quickly to her—grasps her hands.*) But Dorothy, I am very far from drunk now (*Stornway appears on gallery*), and I tell you—(*looks up, sees Stornway descending stairs, drops her hands, steps back*).

STORN. (*At foot of stairs*) Why, what is this? David, you are not making love to Lady Fenton, I hope. Fie, man! You are fickle!

DAVID: (*Turns toward him cringingly*) Your lordship is pleased to be pleasant! I was admiring Lady Fenton's ruffle—*Valenciennes*, I take it—and very choice; and telling her of the many kindnesses your lordship so generously confers upon his unworthy vicar.

STORN.: (*Lays his hand indulgently upon David's shoulder.*) Thank you, David! You're not a bad fellow—so long as you are sober. Be off with you to Evans; he's dying, they tell me. Just my luck! He could tie a better cravat than any man in the kingdom.

DAVID: (*Reverently inclining his head*) The ways of Providence are inscrutable. If heaven sees fit to chasten your lordship, doubtless you shall be—as anciently, in the case of Job—rewarded by a recompense (*looks with meaning toward Dorothy*), by a thousand-fold recompense! (*Ascends stairs.*)

STORN.: O, David—I forgot; don't leave the castle without seeing me again. I may need you presently.

DAVID: (*On upper stairs, bows.*) I am always yours to command, my lord. (*Exits upper door.*)

DOR.: (*Sits R. of table*) So, my lord, you and George have finished your game at last! Were you "a noble loser" again?

STORN.: (*L. of table—regards her intently.*) I a loser? Ah, no! I have just learned how to win.

DOR.: Then pray endeavor to look a little more cheerful. You are staring at me like a beggar at a bakery window.

STORN.: There is little difference between me and a hungry beggar; we both cannot forego longing glances at what we most desire. I could push the simile further, and liken your coquetry to the intervening window pane—not easily broken through, but very, very transparent, Dorothy.

DOR.: You are not overwhelmingly polite; but then, I've warned you before that living in the country is bad for the manners.

STORN.: I am sorry you think me a boor; but, as I've told you so often, it rests with you to make me what you will.

DOR.: (*Rises—playfully extends her hand to him*) Then, Ned, I'll make you my—friend!

STORN.: (*Clasping her hand passionately*) Dorothy, will you marry me? I ask it for the third time.

DOR.: (*Withdrawing her hand*) Is it only the third time? Dear me! it seems like the thirtieth time!

STORN.: (*Fiercely*) How you madden me! Sometimes, I think I hate you. O, Dorothy—Dorothy—(*smites his breast*), give me back a human heart in place of this flame you have kindled here, or I shall go mad! Last night I dreamed of hell—and you were there, where the flames leaped and curled about the poor lost souls; I, too, was there—and through eternity I heard you cry to God in vain, O, dear, wonderful woman! And I was glad!—glad!—for I hated you * * * Even so, sometimes, when I feel that I must go mad for love of you, I yet hate you with a fervor that thrills every fiber of my being.

DOR.: (*Tremulous—masters herself with effort*) Really, you half-suffocate me with your flames and your brimstone! You breathe conflagrations like a devil in a pantomime. If you'll excuse me, my lord, I'll go and join my brother.

STORN.: (*Detaining her—quietly*) And you let me kiss you today! O, I know you struggled; but you did not struggle very hard, did you, Dorothy?

DOR.: Insolent! I—I scorn your insinuation. I wish to go to my brother.

STORN.: (*Casually*) 'Faith! that reminds me; I've been remiss. I bear you a message from George. Tonight he had a letter from Morgan, his agent—and mine, too, by the way,—who, it seems, has found, at last, a good buyer for Waring Court, if the sale be made immediately. The opportunity was too good to lose; so George left the Island an hour ago.

DOR.: He—left the Island?

STORN.: Yes. By a rare chance some of my men were just setting out from the village pier for the mainland. And George said he knew you could safely return to London in Mrs. Merton's care.

DOR.: (*Perplexed*) He should not have gone without seeing me. He should * * * I'll go and speak with Mrs. Merton. Good night, my lord.

STORN.: (*Intercepts her casually*) Why, that's the unfortunate part of it all. The same boat brought Mrs. Merton a summons to the bedside of her husband, who, it appears, is very ill in London. By another rare chance, some of my men were at the Northeast pier on the point of sailing for the mainland; so she and her maid embarked at once.

DOR.: Mrs. Merton gone? With no word to me?

STORN.: Yes—you were not in the drawing-room, she said—nor in your apartments; and haste was urgent, for the boat was waiting.

DOR.: (*With sudden remembrance*) Your little page so importuned me to go and see his cage of bullfinches in the West Tower that I * * * O, she should not have gone!

STORN.: She was loath to go. But she said your brother was here to be-token propriety. And, by the oddest misfortune, I forgot to tell her that George had left from the village pier a half hour before. My memory is lamentably treacherous! As you say, living in the country—

DOR.: (*Suddenly turning upon him*) You planned this!

STORN.: (*Calmly*) Frankly, yes! A stupid recreation, I dare say. But as you justly observed, country life coarsens a man's tastes. Assuredly, my dear, you must train your husband's imagination to higher things when you are Lady Stornway.

DOR.: (*Unheeding*) I am alone * * * alone in this place—with you!

STORN.: The situation has its charms, I confess.

DOR.: Alone * * * O, you devil!

STORN.: Your remark is more notable for its force than its justice. But—you are alone upon Stornway; and upon Stornway there are many

devils. There are ten of them yonder on guard around the castle, in case your brother should return inopportunately—or some rare guest should venture here.

DOR.: What an outrage—what an infamous outrage!

STORN.: I grant that the situation would outrage propriety; if Lady Fenton spends this night at Stornway it would be at the hazard of her reputation.

DOR.: (*Baffled—dismayed*) No—it is impossible—

STORN.: But Lady Stornway can spend not only this night, but all future nights here with the sanction of the most punctilious prude. Fortunately, the vicar is right up there—so no question of validity need ever arise.

DOR.: (*Plucking feverishly at her gown*) Let me think * * * O, I can't think! I—I am afraid! O, Ned! Ned! You cannot do this thing! I trusted you—

STORN.: Is that all you have done, Dorothy?

DOR.: Ah, I know I let you make love to me. Yes—I liked having you make love to me. Some women are like that. But I cannot—cannot marry you, Ned.

STORN.: Why? You have never told me why.

DOR.: (*With difficulty*) There is a man yonder in England—

STORN.: (*Fiercely*) You love him?

DOR.: (*Slowly nods assent*) But * * *

STORN.: He shall never have you!

DOR.: (*Humbly*) He does not want me—

STORN.: (*Incredulous*) Ah! how do you know?

DOR.: Because * * * he loves my—stepdaughter! That is very amusing, isn't it Ned? I'll soon be his mother-in-law! Why don't you laugh? Come—let us both laugh! first at this—and then at the jest you've played on me: Do you know, for a moment I thought you were in earnest? But George went to sleep over the cards, didn't he? And Mrs. Merton is in bed with headache, isn't she? Of course! And you thought you'd retaliate upon me for teasing you. You were quite right. It's a very good jest. Now—let us laugh at it. (*Laughs. Grasps his arm.*) Laugh, Ned! O, in God's name, laugh—laugh—or I shall go mad!

STORN.: (*Regards her coldly*) Matrimony is a serious thing, Dorothy. It is not seemly for us, who are so soon to enter it, to show such levity. I wonder what can be keeping David York?

DOR.: (*Starts*) David York! What irony of Fate! I am here at your mercy—and his! The two men I * * * (*With a sudden change of thought turns to him with a winsome smile.*) So you do really want me to marry you, Ned? Well—we must see! But, as you say, it is a serious thing. Do you know, you say such sensible things, Ned.

STORN.: (*Dryly*) I thank you!

DOR.: (*Nodding brightly*) Yes, you do! Not at all like those silly fops yonder in London. (*Modestly.*) I dare say, we'll be very happy together. But you wouldn't respect me if I married you suddenly like this, would you? So you'll let me think it over for a month * * * is that too long? Well, I think it is myself. Say, a week then. I must have my wedding finery, you know. Women are such vain creatures—not big and brave and sensible, like you men! (*Takes his hand.*) See how much larger your hand is than mine—mine is quite lost in it, isn't it? So, since I'm such a vain little thing, you'll let me go over to London for some clothes, won't you? And we'll be married in a week! But you'll let me go first—away from this dreadful place—away. * * * O, I didn't mean that! It is only for clothes—I swear it is only for clothes! I'll come back to you, Ned! (*Fondles his hand.*) Why, of course, I'll come back! But you must give me time, Ned, dear,—you must—you must, I tell you! (*Drops his hand; sobs*): O, God! its no use!

STORN.: (*Half sadly*) No—its no use. You are not Delilah, nor I a Samson to be undone by your wiles. I would have preferred that you came to me willingly; but since you won't, I must needs marry you and win you afterward. (*Goes to stair—calls*): David! David York! (*David appears on gallery.*) When Charon is sped—come! Hymen has need of you.

DAVID: I am coming, my lord. (*Descends stairs slowly—pauses before Stornway with a servile bow.*)

STORN.: David, Lady Fenton is about to make me the happiest of men. Have you a prayer book with you?

DAVID: Assuredly, my lord—as befits a man of my holy calling.

STORN.: Then there need be no delay. We wish to be married at once.

DAVID: (*Smiles—chafes his hands uneasily*) The match is somewhat of the suddenest, my lord. But I've known these impromptu marriages to turn out very happily—very hapily, indeed. I suppose her ladyship's brother will grace the occasion with his presence?

STORN.: (*Quickly*) No—unfortunately, Mr. Waring was called away to London tonight.

DAVID: Ah? Perhaps then your other guest, Mrs. Merton—

STORN.: (*Impatiently*) She has, unfortunately, been called to London also.

(*The two men look at each other; Stornway, insolently; David, with a furtive contempt soon masked with the smile of the lackey, as he searches his pockets and produces his prayer book.*)

DOR.: (*Springs toward David, catches his hand in a frenzy of helplessness.*) Ah, no, David! help me—help me! Don't you see how it is? He has turned into a devil! But you are not base, David—you are a man! O, God! if I only were a man I would * * * (*Turns upon Stornway, shaking with impotent fury; goes cowering back to David.*) But I'm just a woman—and you used to love me, David. You cannot have forgotten how you used to love me!

DAVID: No—I haven't forgotten! Your plea is a strange one, Lady Fenton. As I understand it, you appeal to me to meddle in your affairs upon the ground that you once made a fool of me.

DOR.: No—no, David! don't you remember how happy we were? Don't you remember how the nightingales used to sing moonlit evenings when we sat in the rose arbor, planning, O, so many happy things! Don't you remember the cottage we planned, David? How we quarreled because I wanted to have rose vines all over it? You said it would make the room too dark. * * * You said * * * O, David, don't you remember?

DAVID: I remember very clearly. It shames even an old sot like me to think I was ever so utterly at the mercy of such a heartless jilt. Remember? God! I remember every vow you ever made to me—every glance—every caress—every kiss! They were all lies, Dorothy—all lies!

DOR.: (*Falls upon her knees before him—grasps his hand*) O, David—David! if I had only gone to live with you in that little cottage we never built.

DAVID: Your regrets are belated. I must ask you to rise, your attitude is unbecoming in one so soon to be Lady Stornway.

DOR.: (*Rises wearily*) Has neither one of you ever heard of manhood—though but as distantly as one hears summer thunder? Had neither one of you a woman for your mother—a woman as I am—

STORN.: These rhetorical passages are not pertinent. (*Dorothy shrinks back toward couch R. Stornway goes to her; David goes R. C.*) So,

my dear, David is another one of your victims! That adds quite a touch of romance to the situation. (*Takes her hand—faces David.*) But come, parson David—dispatch! Your lady's for your betters now.

DAVID: (*With a quick, maglignant look, opens his prayer book, intones, solemnly*) “Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God”—

DOR.: (*Stretching her hands toward him*) I am helpless, David—utterly helpless!

DAVID: “To join together this man and this woman”—

DOR.: You can not do it, David! Remember—not me—not the folly of my girlhood—not the man I have made you—ah, no! Remember only the man you have been, David York!

DAVID: (*Stunned, catches his breath sharply*) What?

DOR.: Ah, thank God! You do remember!

DAVID: (*Mechanically*) The man—I have been? Ah, yes * * * the man I have been.

STORN.: (*Wearily*) Upon my word, this getting married is a tedious business! Proceed—proceed, David York!

DAVID: (*Quietly lays prayer book on table*) I cannot do it—the woman is right.
(*Dorothy staggers back—falls upon couch.*)

STORN.: (*Heedless of Dorothy—incredulous*) I beg your pardon?

DAVID: (*Goes quickly to Dorothy—arranges pillow under her head—throws a light drapery on the couch over her with grudging tenderness; steps back—faces Stornway calmly*) The woman is right, my lord. There is such a thing as manhood—though you nor I can boast it. I might have done so once—before that woman came into my life. Then—God pity me!—I forgot that I was His servant—and set out to go to the devil. (*Fiercely.*) But I went farther than that—for I went to you, Edward Grey—

STORN.: (*Tolerantly*) I have had to warn you before this, David, that you must not take too much gin when I am apt to need you.

DAVID: O, I am, indeed, beholden to you two; to her for making me a sot—to you for making me a lackey! (*Crosses R. to couch; Stornway R. C.*) But I will save her from you—not for her sake—God, no!—but for the sake of the man I have been! I owe that man reparation; I have ruined his body, dulled his mind, made his fair name a foul thing—but as God reigns, I'll avenge that man tonight!

STORN.: I begin to fear that heroics are contagious; possibly I, too, shall begin to rant in a moment. David, you are pitifully drunk. You defy me? Why, you are my chattel—bought and paid for! You defy me. (*Laughs genially.*) Ah, wine is a mocker, David! Come! We'll have no more of this. (*Thrusts prayer book in his hand.*) Let us get it over.

DAVID: (*Tosses book aside—half turns from him.*) I will not do it! (*Turns to find Stornway's sword pointing at his heart.*) O, you wouldn't kill an unarmed man, my lord!

STORN.: I trust I shall not have to. But a ceremony we must have, otherwise—man, man! don't be a fool! Think of my fellows yonder—any one of them would be glad to run you through at a word from me.

DAVID: (*Quietly—picks up prayer book.*) It's no use! A poor knave cannot afford the luxury of honesty; and even vermin have an aversion to death. (*Bows.*) I return to my obedience, my lord. Perhaps it was the gin * * * perhaps * * * But now I'm at your service. Though, if you'll pardon me, I warn you that you are showing scant forethought; Lady Fenton's brother may get news of this by dawn—so many of your people visit the mainland at night and, in their cups, will blab. You should have set sentinels.

STORN: I have done so. Still there is something in what you say. (*Crossing to table—strikes bell.*) We will make our plans a little safer.
(*Enter Joyce L. C.*)

JOYCE: My lord?

STORN.: Joyce, have any boats left the Island since I gave my last orders?

JOYCE: No, my lord—the storm arose.

STORN.: See that none do. Also see that no person leaves or enters the castle grounds tonight.

JOYCE: Yes, my lord.

DAVID: Pardon me, my lord—but I have a *rendezvous* on the mainland tonight; you would not have me break faith with a lady, would you?

STORN.: You are a wanton rascal, David. (*Reflects an instant.*) There's no danger of your going to George Waring after performing this ceremony; you value your trifling life too dearly for that! (*To Joyce*): You will pass Mr. York, Joyce; no one else—understand—no one else!

JOYCE: Yes, my lord.

DAVID: (*With a gesture toward the couch.*) Better warn Joyce there may be some disturbance soon; a lamentation or so.

STORN.: (*Claps him on shoulder*) That's the old David—always alert! Joyce, let no one enter this Hall except the sentinels, who are to report to me at midnight. Now, go! (*Exit Joyce.*)

(*David stands before fire turning over leaves of prayer book. Stornway goes to couch, takes Dorothy's hand.*) Come, my dear. 'Faith, has she really swooned? (*Bends over her. David slips book in his pocket; stealthily springs upon chair L. of fire; takes sword from the wall; wrests it from scabbard; leaps down with it drawn. Stornway turns.*) Why, David—what the devil—

DAVID: Tricked! tricked! You were always a fool, Edward Grey!

STORN.: (*Dazed*) What do you mean?

DAVID: That you're a fool! I did not know the castle was guarded—you told me! I needed privacy; you insured it to me! I needed a sword you had it here to my hand! O, beyond doubt, you're a fool!

STORN.: (*Drawing sword*) Gad! You've tricked me neatly! I've even given them orders to pass you after you've murdered me! You're clever, David; but one thing you've overlooked; I shall kill you presently—the paltriest knave unchanged in England!

DAVID: (*Laughs*) No matter—if you do not, your sentinels will! But for all that, I mean to kill you—for her sake there—and for the sake of the man I have been. Then, I shall give my life for hers. Ah, I am doomed, too, my lord! Guard! (*They fight; David clumsily, but doggedly and calmly. Stornway thrusts through his guard and wounds him in the arm, but he fights on unheedingly; and step by step forces Stornway back toward the altar where the candles are still burning; and at last his sword strikes home.*)

STORN.: (*Drops his sword—staggers backward*) Oh, David—I am afraid * * * help me David! (*Falls dead before the altar.*)

DAVID: (*Bending over him*) Too late * * * (*Arises, looks sadly upon him.*) But he may find God—somewhere! (*Drops curtain over altar; wipes his sword mechanically on curtain's edge.*)

DOR.: (*Awakens from her swoon; half rises—looks about hall vaguely*) David, are you here?

DAVID: Yes—I am still here.

DOR.: (*In fear*) Has he gone?

DAVID: Aye—he has gone!

DOR.: Oh! where?

DAVID: No man knoweth.

DOR.: I—I don't understand—

DAVID: (*Going slowly toward her*) No! Neither do I * * * He is dead, Dorothy.

DOR.: (*Shudders.*) Dead! Oh, thank God!

DAVID: (*Sadly*) God had nothing to do with it * * * Thank me.

DOR.: (*Shrinking from him*) You, David York?

DAVID: (*Impetuously*) Never mind that now! Get up—listen! Can you keep your head?

DOR.: (*Staggers to her feet; dully.*) What is it? I am very tired, David!

DAVID: (*Takes her hand*) No—you have not time to be tired. Listen: You are upon Stornway—amongst men who differ from beasts by being a thought more cruel. The sooner you get away, the better. Joyce has orders to pass no one but me. Very well—put on this cloak! (*Catches up his cloak, puts it around her*) Now—turn up the collar, so! You may thank your stars that it's a stormy night—and that I am a little man. You detest little men, don't you? Yes—I remember! * * * Now, listen! When I open that door (*points to door L.C.*), go out along that corridor; there's only one light—on the left; keep to the right in the shadow. Pay no attention to the sentinels. Walk unsteadily; if you can manage a hiccough, the personation will be more life-like. The sentinels will expect something of the sort and will not trouble you—they know that I am quarrelsome when I'm drunk. (*Looks about for his hat*) This is a diverting world, Dorothy. (*Takes up hat—tries to put in shape.*) You perceive that even drunkenness and a bad temper may have their uses! (*Begins to place his hat on her head.*)

DOR.: (*Arrests his hand*) But I do not understand—

DAVID: (*Hopelessly*) You understand very little except coquetry and the latest fashions! This is very simple—my horse is tied at the postern; mount him—cross-saddle, mind you! You know the way to the vicarage—so does the horse; you will find my faithful old serving man there. Tell him to row you to the mainland and take you on to London. Do you understand?

DOR.: (*Flings off cloak—sinks upon chair R. C.*) Yes—I understand! I am to steal away in the darkness and leave you here alone to answer for Lord Stornway's death—to those devils out there! Do you think I would do that?

DAVID: (*Catching his breath—falls on his knees beside her*) You would stay with me, Dorothy?

DOR.: I will not purchase my life at the price of yours. I will owe you nothing, David York!

DAVID: (*Looks in her face sadly*) Do you know, Dorothy, if destiny had given us the chance, I think that I might have been a man—and you, a woman! (*Rises—reflects.*) Yes, you would stay! Knowing, too, what it signifies. I know it is just your damnable pride! but its brave, at any rate. However, you need not stay. The men of Stornway will not harm me.

DOR.: (*Incredulous*) They will not harm you?

DAVID: (*Turns away*) Nay, they will hail me as their deliverer. That man was their tyrant; they obeyed him, yes! but only through fear. But if they found a woman here—a beautiful woman! * * * O, it's impossible! I tell you, Dorothy, I will come to no harm. (*Smiles at her reassuringly.*)

DOR.: (*Rises—looks searchingly in his face*) Will you swear it, David?

DAVID: (*Still Smiling*) Yes—I swear to you that only peace awaits me.

DOR.: Then I will go! So * * * goodby, David! I shall never see you again; (*he bows his head.*) But O, David—I almost wish that we had gone to live in that little cottage we planned and quarreled over, and never built. I believe we would have been happy.

DAVID: (*Seizes her hand, kisses it*) Yes—we would have been happy! * * * But now—you must hasten, Dorothy. (*Adjusts cloak about her,*) and so—goodby! (*Leads her to door.*)

DOR.: Why have you done this thing, David?

DAVID: (*With a gesture of despair*) I love you * * * I have loved you all my life!

DOR.: I am sorry! I am not worthy of your love.

DAVID: No—you are not worthy of it. Neither am I * * * But I love you. (*Opens door—stands with bowed head, as she slowly passes out; and so—until he hears her horse's hoof-beats pass on into silence. Then he closes the door—goes slowly to R. C., lifts his head proudly.*) A brave woman, that! * * * O, a trifling, shallow-hearted jilt—but a brave woman! She would have stayed, if I had not lied to her! * * * Why, he was their god, that man! * * * Heaven knows, I loved him, too! He was the only friend I ever had * * * So, when they come at midnight they will kill me * * * God! the man I might have been! (*Goes R.*) And now—to put her out of my mind! After all these years to put her quite out of my mind! (*Clock softly chimes the hour of midnight—while he picks up prayer book, goes to altar; throws back curtain.*) Perhaps I will have time to say a bit of prayer for Edward Grey. (*Kneels. The voices of the courier and sailors are heard far in the distance singing "Light o' Love;" they sound nearer and nearer.*)

CURTAIN.

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Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Oct. 2009

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